



Additional chart coverage may be found in CATP2, Catalog of Nautical Charts.  
**SECTOR 3 — CHART INFORMATION**

## SECTOR 3

### THE BAHAMAS—EASTERN PART

**Plan.**—This sector describes the eastern part of the Bahamas, from San Salvador Island to Navidad Bank, the E seamount of the Bahamas.

The description is from W to E; passages in the area are discussed from N to S.

#### General Remarks

**3.1** See the General Remarks topic at the beginning of Sector 2 for information dealing with the Bahamas.

**San Salvador Island** (24°02'N., 74°30'W.), the E of the islands fronting Exuma Sound and the commonly conceded first landfall by Columbus, is reef-fringed throughout, destitute of natural harbors, and characterized by a remarkable interior terrain consisting of a series of widely scattered, interconnected salt water lakes separated by ridges of hills no higher than 43m.

Offshore, the E approaches to the island are imperfectly examined, so it is recommended that ocean vessels remain outside the 200m curve. The W approaches, though more closely surveyed, lead in over a sea floor that slopes up with comparative abruptness to a more or less continuous coastal margin of sunken dangers.

Recommended anchorage is reported off Cockburn Town, about 0.2 to 0.3 mile SW of the light. The approach should be from the SW to avoid anchoring in the cable area. It was further noted that the anchorage had level bottom, coral, average depth 12.8m, allowing a swing circle almost totally outside the 10m curve. From this anchorage, it is a relatively short distance by small boat to the marina.

Because of the characteristics of the bottom, the mariner should ensure the anchor is holding fast as the prevailing winds will swing W and SW without warning.

**Aspect.**—There is a red mast and light located in position 24°03'N, 74°32'W near the landing place at Cockburn Town. Two range beacons, 27m apart and in line bearing 024°, lead into the landing.

Confusing to the mariner from the offing is a marina constructed about midway between Riding Rock Point and Cockburn Town; here likewise is a set of ranges to the approach of this new small boat facility. This range is reported to be about 075°, but the lighted markers are unreliable.

**Riding Rock Point** (24°04'N., 74°32'W.) is located 2 miles N of Cockburn Town. There is an airfield at Riding Rock Point and numerous buildings and radio masts stand close to the point. Conspicuous are some tanks painted in red and white checks from which fixed obstruction lights are shown. These landmarks are located 0.3 mile SE of the point.

San Salvador Light, standing on Dixon Hill on the E side of the island, is a convenient aid to vessels making for Crooked Island Passage, by way of San Salvador Island's E side.

The light is largely obscured to vessels attempting to pass W of the islands. A conspicuous red and white checkered water tower is about 1.25 miles NNW of the light.

**3.2 Rum Cay** (23°40'N., 74°53'W.), the Santa Maria de la Concepcion of Columbus, is largely low-lying and flat throughout, except for a few rolling hills that approach the shoreline in remarkable white bluffs. The NW extremity of Rum Cay forms a low point, but a projection 1.5 miles E has a flat rock, 9m high, at its outer end.

A dangerous sunken reef extends 2 miles N from the NW extremity. A wreck is stranded on the N edge of the reef.

Sumner Point, the S extremity, is backed by one such bluff that is radar conspicuous at 10 miles. The W end of the island is low and sandy and has temporary anchorage during prevailing E winds for vessels with local knowledge in 12.8m.

The S side of the island is fronted by the somewhat encumbered bight Saint George Bay which, in its turn, is fronted to the S by a narrow sunken ridge.

The sea breaks over the ridge in heavy weather and the main boat passage through it has least depth of 10.1m.

Shallower depths occur farther inside. Outside the ridge, flood currents set W.

Port Nelson, in the E part of Saint George's Bay, is the principal settlement on Rum Cay, with population of about 100 inhabitants. A light is exhibited at Port Nelson.

Vessels intending to enter Saint George's Bay and anchor off Port Nelson, steer for the elevation backing Cotton Field Point light on a heading of 012° and proceed so as to transit the main boat passage leading through the sunken ridge fronting Saint George's Bay.

When the pier fronting Port Nelson bears 081°, they haul to starboard and, steering an ENE course, proceed to the charted anchorage in about 7.4m, where they are sheltered from all but hurricane winds. The entrance channel has a reported least depth of 10.1m, decreasing to 9m in the fairway.

**Cockburn Town** (24°03'N., 74°32'W.), the administrative center for the island as well as for Rum Cay, lies on the W side of San Salvador Island. It is only on this side that there is suitable anchorage.

#### Crooked Island Passage to Caicos Passage

**3.3** The sea area between Crooked Island Passage and Caicos Passage, about 120 miles to the ESE and extending S to the approaches to the Windward Passage, is distinctive in that the vast expanses of shoal water characterizing the Little Bahama Bank and Great Bahama Bank to the NW, and, to a lesser extent, the shoal water seamount plateau to the SE are largely absent with the consequence that the several islands lying scattered throughout the area are not, with notable exception, fronted by any appreciable shoal water coastal margin.

The seaway is deep and the islands and few sunken dangers rise steep-to.

**Crooked Island Passage** (22°55'N., 74°34'W.) lies between Long Island and Crooked Island, where it serves as a much

frequented link in the transit of the Bahamas by vessels enroute from U.S. east coast ports to the Panama Canal by way of the Windward Passage.

Vessels commonly pass to the E of Mira Por Vos Cays and transit Mira Por Vos Passage. If intending to pass W of Mira Por Vos Cays, proceed so as to clear Diana Bank, a sand and coral patch with a least charted depth of 16.5m about 19 miles S of Long Island, and Brown Bank, another sand and coral patch with a least charted depth of 18.7m an additional 60 miles farther to the S.

Diana Bank is steep-to, easily distinguished in a good light and usually marked by surface water agitation or rips near its E side. Over Diana Bank, the current is reported to set SW, frequently at a rate of 1 knot.

Brown Bank may be distinguished in calm weather by surface water agitation near its edges or over its shallower parts.

**Samana Cay** (Atwood Cay) (23°06'N., 73°42'W.) is a hilly, sparsely inhabited island lying well clear to the E of Crooked Island Passage and away from the usual shipping lanes. It is low and sandy near its W extremity, reef-fringed throughout, and elevated in a conspicuous white cliff on its S side.

There are two bays with sandy beaches, separated by a headland, near the middle of the S side.

Although holding ground is not ideal, there is anchorage in depths of about 14.6m, 0.3 mile offshore on the S side of Samana Cay about 2 miles from its W extremity.

**3.4** The Crooked Island group, lying on the E side of Crooked Island Passage, comprises several low-lying to somewhat hilly islands which, disposed roughly in the form of a triangle and rising steep-to, largely enclose an extensive and, for the general sea area, exceptional shoal water bay, the Bight of Acklins, with depths of 1.8 to 4.1m.

**Crooked Island** (22°45'N., 74°13'W.), the N of the Crooked Island group, covers a considerable area. There are several coves where anchorage can be secured for small vessels with local knowledge of variable current conditions and access passages through blocking reefs.

The island is high and Blue Hill in particular presents an excellent landmark. Colonel Hill, a settlement atop one of the higher hills near the center of Crooked Island, is the administrative focus for the island group.

**Bird Rock** (22°51'N., 74°22'W.), 6m high, is located on the reef that fringes the N side of Crooked Island, 1 mile NW of the NW extremity of the island. The reef extends nearly 1 mile NNW from Bird Rock.

Although the current N of Crooked Island is predominantly NW at a rate 0.5 to 0.7 knots, its constancy is low and a S or SW current sometimes flows into Crooked Island Passage. Rates of up to 3 knots have been observed.

Portland Harbour, a small reef basin anchorage, is reported subject to a strong surge uncomfortable to small vessels. Local knowledge is essential in attempting the passage to the anchorage.

A better anchorage in a good holding ground of sand and grass, lies farther down the wooded low-lying W side of the island in a position about 0.5 mile S of Landrail Point.

Vessels are advised to approach this anchorage with caution and, in winter, to prepare to get underway as soon as the wind veers S of E.

**3.5 Long Cay** (Fortune Island) (22°37'N., 74°20'W.), the W of the Crooked Island group, is somewhat wooded and generally low-lying, except for a scattering of hills. Fortune Hill is a good landmark and particularly conspicuous from the N or S.

Albert Town, a very small community close N of Fortune Hill, faces NW and onto a narrow coastal bank having marginal to dangerous anchorage for small vessels which, because of limited swinging room, must prepare to get underway as soon as the wind shifts from offshore. A stranded wreck is found 0.2 mile W of the town.

A better anchorage, particularly during strong N winds, lies close S of Windsor Point, the S extremity of the island, marked by a light, in a position having an excellent holding ground. Vessels are advised not to approach the anchorage at night.

**Acklins Island** (22°26'N., 73°58'W.), the largest and E of the Crooked Island group, has a natural harbor at Atwood lying 12 miles E of Majors Cay where the reef opening is wide and more easily identified than at Major's Cay.

It is reported the light at the entrance is better maintained and more reliable than others in this part of the Bahamas.

Castle Island, to the SW, is low and sandy, except at its N end where it becomes fairly high and rugged. It is fronted to the SW extremity of Acklins Island by rocks and a dangerous sunken reef impassable to all but small vessels with knowledge of this area.

There is anchorage on the NW side of Castle Island, sheltered from E winds in 16.5m in a position on the narrow, steep-to coastal bank with Castle Island Light bearing 185° and with Northwest Rock bearing 078°.

The bight formed in the SW part of Acklins Island, between South West Point and the low, scrub-covered Salina Point to the N, has similar anchorage.

South Cay, which is a good radar target at 12 miles, lies about 11 miles NNE of Salina Point.

The large, enclosed shoal bay of the Bight of Acklins is suitable only for small craft with local knowledge.

**3.6 Mira Por Vos Passage** (22°05'N., 74°26'W.), the continuation of the much frequented route through Crooked Island Passage, is the clear deep-water seaway lying between Castle Island, to the E, and the several low-lying barren islets and adjacent sunken dangers of Mira Por Vos Cays (Mira Por Vos Shoals), to the W.

Currents commonly set SW across the passage and onto Mira Por Vos Cays, but it has been reported that at times they may become variable and even set NE onto Castle Island.

South Cay, the largest of the islets on the W side of the passage, has on its S side two conspicuous sand hills.

About 0.5 mile off its W side, there is an anchorage in 14.6 to 16.5m, sand, during moderate weather and with the wind from the E.

**Directions.**—From a position about 10 miles E of San Salvador Light, steer to pass about 6.3 miles off Bird Rock Light, about 7 miles off Windsor Point Light, and 4 miles W of Castle Island Light.

If passing W of Mira Por Vos Cays, steer to clear Diana Bank and Brown Bank as previously described.

**Mayaguana Passage** (22°32'N., 73°15'W.), midway between Crooked Island Passage and Caicos Passage, is a deep-water open seaway which, entered between Plana Cays and Mayaguana Island, serves as an approach of secondary importance to vessels seeking to transit the Windward Passage.

**Plana Cays** (French Cays) (22°37'N., 73°33'W.), on the W side of Mayaguana Passage, consist of two small seasonally inhabited reef-fringed islands lying atop two distinct seamount-like risings from the sea floor.

These two cays stretch about 9 miles in an E-W direction, where the W cay has limited but sheltered anchorage in about 12.8m, sand, on the steeply sloping coastal bank fronting its W side.

Anchorage is available on the W side of the cay in depth of 15m, sand with isolated coral heads, with the summit of the cay bearing 095° and about 0.2 mile off the cay. The E island rises to a summit near its W extremity and falls away in low-lying flat land towards its E extremity.

A shoal water coastal bank, extending from the E island into Mayaguana Passage, has a dark rocky bottom which, failing to show up well, should be approached with caution. A 12m tower is located near the E tip of the E island.

**3.7 Mayaguana Island** (22°23'N., 72°57'W.), on the E side of Mayaguana Passage, is a large sparsely inhabited island which, thickly wooded and low-lying for the greater part, rises in a series of hills and hillocks.

The island is a very useful port of call for vessels bound to and from the Caribbean as it lies 50 miles E of Acklins Island and on the direct shipping route.

The E end of the island is more hilly than the W end which, though rather steep-to, is very low and difficult to make out, particularly from the SW. Abraham Bay Hill, near the middle of the island, slopes up gradually from Abraham Bay, a large shoal water coastal indentation on the S side of the island.

The community of Abraham Bay, serving as the administrative center for the island, stands on the NE side of the bay while, on the NW side, there is a large conspicuous white building. Two towers are located near the airport on the NW side of the bay.

Abraham Bay E entrance approach has anchorage in a charted depth of about 18.3m, hard sand, in a position not quite 1 mile from Guano Point and with Abraham Bay Hill bearing 060°.

The W entrance approach has anchorage in about 18.3m, sand, in a position about 0.5 mile S of Start Point. Mayaguana Island's W side has temporary anchorage in 32.9m in a position on the narrow steeply sloping coastal bank fronting a very small uncharted shoreside community.

**Hogsty Reef** (21°41'N., 73°49'W.), lying central to surrounding land areas and adjacent to several direct routes joining the Crooked Island, Mayaguana, and Caicos Passages with the Windward Passage, is a small coral atoll.

The atoll rising steep-to from the sea floor, is a roughly horseshoe-shaped outer reef which dries in places at LW enclosing a lagoon where depths of from 6 to 9m exist.

The W side of the atoll is comparatively open between the low-lying somewhat grassy Northwest Cay and the equally low-lying but quite barren Southeast Cay. A light is shown from Northwest Cay.

This opening has good anchorage in 7.3 to 9.1m in a position about 0.5 mile SE of Northwest Cay.

Currents in the anchorage and round about Hogsty Reef in general are reported irregular in both set and velocity.

A stranded wreck lies on the NE side of Hogsty Reef. The wreck has been reported to be radar conspicuous at about 18 miles and to be lying upright on a heading of 142°. It is a potential source of dangerous confusion to the mariner unaware of the stranding.

From a distance of 5 to 8 miles, the stranded Hogsty freighter might be mistaken for a vessel underway. This conspicuous landmark is visible farther than the light tower.

**Great Inagua Island** (21°05'N., 73°18'W.), one of the largest and certainly the S of the Bahamas, lies due S of Mayaguana Passage. It is generally low throughout, wooded and quite flat save for a scattering of scrub-covered sand hills of which East Hill, near the E coast of the island, is the highest.

The entire coastline, with few exceptions, is fronted by a steeply sloping narrow margin of sunken dangers not having a convenient entrance to a comfortable natural harbor. Little Inagua Island, to the N, is flat and uninhabited.

**3.8 Man of War Bay** (21°05'N., 73°41'W.), on the W side of Great Inagua Island, is a steeply shelving coastal indentation entered between the low-lying wooded North West Point and the scrub-covered Middle Point (Devil Point).

There is a T-shaped jetty for loading solar salt from the extensive salt operation on the island; its length from the shore is 366m with a berthing face of 198m at its head and a depth alongside of 12.5m. This facility is known as the Morton Salt loading terminal. Bulk carriers up to 35,000 dwt can be accommodated. General cargo vessels can be loaded/discharged by barges at anchorages about 0.7 mile each to the N and S of the jetty. Leading lights are N of the pier area.

There is a small wharf that is located on the N shore of the bay with a depth alongside of 2.4m, capable of accommodating vessels up to 46m long.

For vessels loading at Man of War Bay, a pilot is compulsory and may be taken aboard 1 mile off the jetty.

Vessels awaiting a berth anchor N or S of the wharf. It was reported that a good anchorage in 9.1m lay in a position with the wharf bearing 178°, distant 2.3 miles.

**3.9 Matthew Town** (20°57'N., 73°40'W.) ([World Port Index No. 10010](#)), S of Man of War Bay, is the administrative center for and the only community of any consequence on Great Inagua Island.

There are two small piers, a lighthouse, and limited facilities for commercial vessels.

Matthew Town faces W towards Matthew Town Road and a gently sloping coastal margin of white coral sand clear of coral heads and other sunken dangers.

The roadstead is commonly free from heavy swell and has charted anchorage in a position well sheltered from the usual E winds. It is rare for the anchorage to be inconvenienced by sea or weather conditions. If conditions become threatening,

however, vessels are advised to depart the anchorage immediately. A light is displayed S of the town.

Anchorage in Matthew Road has depths ranging from 8.2 to 9.1m, coral sand.



**Matthew Town Light from SE**

Molasses Road, an open roadstead in South Bay about 5.5 miles ESE of Matthew Town, has sheltered anchorage during NW through N winds in 14.6m, dark sand, rock and weed, in a position with Saltpond Hill bearing 012°, Southwest Point bearing about 267° and open S of Molasses Reef.

Vessels are advised to approach the anchorage with extreme caution, since the reef is difficult to make out, particularly with an offshore wind, and are advised to leave as soon as the wind shifts to usual E quarter.

### Caicos Passage to Navidad Bank

**3.10** The sea area between Caicos Passage and Navidad Bank, about 250 miles to the ESE, is interspersed with a chain of five seamounts which, more or less evenly spaced, share in a common characteristic in that all sweep abruptly upward, particularly on their NE side, from depths of several thousands of meters.

The two N seamounts rise above the ocean surface in a series of islands and cays while the remaining three seamounts to the ESE approach the surface as extensive shoal water banks, each with one or more scattered dangers having depths of less than 5.5m. Passages between the seamounts are wide, with considerable depths throughout, except for a number of isolated shoal depths through this area.

It is not difficult to transit these waters, but the mariner should exercise the usual practices of safe seamanship.

**3.11 Caicos Passage** (22°00'N., 72°30'W.), the N passage, is entered between Mayaguana Island and Caicos Bank, about 34 miles SE. It then passes between West Caicos and Little Inagua Island and to the E of Great Inagua Island.

This passage is deep and should not present a problem to powered vessels in daylight. At night, vessels are advised to proceed through either Crooked Island Passage or Turks Island Passage and, during periods of poor visibility, to give a wide berth to the steep-to W side of the Caicos Islands.

The only dangers in the N part of the passage are East Reef off Mayaguana Island on the NW side, and the reefs in the vicinity of Providenciales Island on the SE side.

East Reef of Mayaguana Island extends to the E from the coast between Southeast Point and Northeast Point. It is fringed with dangerous reefs and is steep-to on its S side; but a narrow interruption, 4 miles ENE of Southeast Point, will guide small craft with knowledge of the area to comfortable anchorage under Booby Cay, located 0.7 mile SE of **Northeast Point** (22°20'N., 72°43'W.).

A radar conspicuous stranded wreck lies on the reef 1.7 miles E of this narrow break. As mentioned earlier, the other danger of prime concern to the navigator in the Caicos Passage is Providenciales Island.

In addition to the reefs extending from its SE side, the island is also fringed with a dangerous reef, with shoal depths close beyond it, projecting 2 miles NNW of the island's N point. The point is indicated by a moderately high hill surmounted by a pile of stones that falls to a low, sharp point. A light is shown from the NW tip of the island.

**Tides—Currents.**—Currents generally set N in Caicos Passage, with rates up to 0.5 knot. Currents, with rates up to 1.4 knots and setting WNW, have been experienced in position 21°58'N, 72°57'W.

**3.12 Caicos Islands** (21°56'N., 71°58'W.), consisting of numerous thinly wooded islands and cays of weathered limestone, lie along the N and E sides of Caicos Bank.

The bank stretches more than 60 miles across and some 50 miles wide.

**Regulations.**—All vessels arriving from foreign ports should contact the harbormaster on VHF channel 16 for information and instructions before anchoring.

Many traditional anchorage areas are now within the boundaries of six National Marine Parks. Vessels over 18.3m in length may not anchor within these boundaries. Vessels of less than 18.3m may anchor in areas with a sand bottom, but not within 91m of a dive site mooring. All vessels are prohibited from anchorage within 122m of the low water mark of cays designated as protected areas. Grounding in a national marine park is cause for prosecution.

**Signals.**—Vessels bound for any port in the Turks and Caicos islands must forward their ETA to the appropriate harbor master on VHF channel 16. The message should include the vessel's name and call sign, nationality, length, draft, and gross and net registered tonnage.

**Caution.**—The Caicos bank is extremely dangerous to approach from any direction, but particularly from the S or SW. Within the fringing reef and islands there is an extensive area which is totally unsurveyed. There is no secure anchorage for large vessels off the Caicos Bank.

Caicos Bank, on the S and SW sides, are particularly difficult in that many above and below-water dangers lie well seaward of landmarks and in an extreme position, where the shoal water shelf of the bank drops off suddenly to ocean depths.



South Rock, with a depth of less than 1.8m, lies near the S extremity of the bank and within a dark seaweed that obscures much of the bank along its S and E sides.

Remarkable on the bank is Whale Breaker, a group of awash rocks about 7 miles NE of South Rock. A heavy sea will break on the rocks sending a remarkable spout of water to an extraordinary height.

Another mark is West Sand Spit, located midway along the Caicos Bank on its SW side which is almost awash, while French Cay, about 8 miles to the NW, a low bushy islet which serves as a base camp for fishermen for much of the year, is a convenient reference for small vessels with local knowledge to proceed E across the bank. A light is displayed close N of the cay near a stranded wreck.

The SW side of Caicos Bank throughout its length has been observed to present a light green color which, in strong contrast to the deep blue of the ocean, is quite often reflected as a "bank blink" visible from a respectable distance.

**3.13 West Caicos Island** (21°39'N., 72°28'W.) is located about 6 miles SW of Providenciales Island, and is the W island on the bank. West Caicos Island is uninhabited and quite flat with the exception of a hill near Southwest Point that rises to 19.8m.

Another hill, 18.3m high, will be seen 2.5 mile from its N end. The W side of the island is steep-to and the outer edge of the bank, with depths of less than 200m, lies merely 0.1 mile offshore.

Vessels are advised to exercise caution when approaching at night, during periods of poor visibility, and in the early morning when a mist sometimes envelopes the island.

It has been observed that a considerable quantity of Sargasso weed spreads at distances of 0.7 to 1 mile off the island's W side.

West Caicos Island is marked by a light on its SE extremity at Clearsand Road and is reported radar conspicuous at about 13 miles.

Clearsand Road affords good anchorage for small vessels with local knowledge in 9.1 to 11m, sand.

This anchorage is sheltered from winds, N or W, and Southwest Reefs, on its E side, affords protection by breaking the sea from that direction.

The ideal position for the anchorage is just within the fringe of the bank with the hill at 19.8m on West Caicos Island bearing 349°, in depths of 9.1m.

A channel, with a least depth of 4m, navigable with local knowledge, leads from Clearsand Road to Providenciales Island.

**3.14 Providenciales Island** (Blue Hills) (21°47'N., 72°17'W.) is a site of developing tourist trade. It is a large island and among the highest and most attractive in the group. Despite the fact that these islands lie 200 miles dead to windward of Cape Santa Maria, the mariner has become more and more attracted to them.

The highest point of the island is about 85m and a moderately high, peaked hill, surmounted by a pile of stones at the N extremity of Providenciales Island, falls to a low sharp point.

A dangerous reef, with shoal depths close beyond it, extends 2 miles NNW from the point. A light is exhibited near the NW point of the island.

A radio tower, 62m high, stands about 1.5 miles SW of the NE point. A radio mast, 20m high, stands 4 miles farther SW. Obstruction lights are exhibited from both tower and mast.

Malcolm Road is an anchorage on the coastal bank in the N of two bays located on the W side of the island where the bank extends 0.5 mile offshore.

South Bluff, the SW extremity of the island, is bold, white and rocky. There is an inlet to the NW side of the bluff which is known as Chalk Sound.

South Dock is situated at the E entrance point of an inlet located 4 miles E of South Bluff. A wharf, about 61m in length, has a ro-ro ramp at its NE end.

A secondary wharf S of the main wharf is about 33m in length. Both wharves lie within an area dredged to a depth of 3m. Pilotage is available, but not compulsory. The pilots may be contacted on VHF channel 16. Vessel ETA should be sent 4 hours in advance.

West Reef, which breaks constantly, is very dangerous at night. The reef extends SW for about 7.5 miles from the point that separates the two bays on the W side of Providenciales Island. A small sand cay is located near the extremity of the reef, 3 miles NW of the NE extremity of West Caicos Island.

The stranded wreck of a cargo vessel on West Reef is conspicuous both visually and on radar. There is also a wreck SW of the grounded vessel just mentioned.

**3.15 North Caicos Island** (21°56'N., 71°59'W.) is linked to Providenciales by the Caicos Cays. These cays are noted for their magnificent beaches, all separated by deep channels which provide protected anchorage.

North Caicos is a distinctive island by reason of a series of low hills along its N side and by Mary Cays which, charted as off-lying islets, appear as three prominent dark conical small hills near its NW extremity. A stranded wreck lies on the reef E of Mary Cays.

The N side of North Caicos Island is easily identified as its description implies and is radar conspicuous at about 17 miles. A reef skirts the N side and extends 1 mile offshore, and a dangerous reef extends 2 miles NE from its NE extremity in the vicinity of the mouth of Bottle Creek.

The coastal bank is 1 mile wide outside the reef and ledge with depths from 18.3 to 21.9m.

Kew, the largest community on North Caicos Island with several hundred inhabitants, lies about 3.5 miles S of Mary Cays.

**Grand Caicos Island** (21°47'N., 71°43'W.) fills the central position on the NE edge of the bank. It is separated from North Caicos Island by Juniper Hole, and from East Caicos Island by Lorimer Creek, both of which will accommodate only small craft.

As the Grand Caicos Islands and East Caicos Islands continue the Caicos Island Group to the E, an extreme danger persists for approaching vessels, in that a continuous foreshore reef rises steep-to from ocean depths coupled with a strong current that sometimes sets onshore from 5 to 6 miles offshore. The current is very remarkable off Juniper Hole.

The coast between Juniper Hole and **Haulover Point** (21°51'N., 71°41'W.), about 11.5 miles E, is fronted by foul ground to a distance of about 1.7 miles offshore in places.

Haulover Point is flat and when the visibility is poor, accompanied by rain squalls, the point may easily be mistaken for Cape Comete (Drum Point), the NE extremity of East Caicos Island.

A radio tower, exhibiting obstruction lights, lies 3.5 miles WSW of Haulover Point.

Philips Reef is a dangerous, steep-to, coral reef that continually breaks over its scattered heads and lies near the N edge of the bank, with its E end about 2.5 miles E of Cape Comete. The reef drops off abruptly to ocean depths near its outer extremities.

The bank extends about 0.5 mile N and 2 miles E of the reef, so that vessels approaching from this quarter may obtain some warnings of its proximity by careful attention to soundings.

If there is an urgency, the channel between Philips Reef and Cape Comete can be navigated, where the depths are from 9 to 14m, but caution is advised when taking this passage.

The channel passing E of East Caicos has not been fully surveyed.

**3.16 Cockburn Harbor** (21°30'N., 71°30'W.), on South Caicos Island, gives far more protection than might appear from the chart. It is the only secure anchorage on the E side of the Caicos Bank.

The shallows to the S and W break up any sea from those directions, the island itself provides lee from northers and in the event of heavy winds from the SE, there is anchorage in about 11m, 0.2 mile WNW of Dove Cay light, hard sand bottom.

Cockburn Harbor is entered between the NE end of Long Cay and the mid-lying rocky islet, Dove Cay, 0.2 mile ENE. A light is shown from the E end of Long Cay.

Also prominent is Government House located on Government Hill, 0.3 mile NW of Tucker Point, and a white hotel with a green roof located on Parsons Point, about 0.5 mile NW of Tucker Point. There are some radio masts 0.1 mile N of Tucker Point.

The edge of the bank, with depths of less than 200m, lies 0.5 mile S of Dove Cay and there are reported depths of 8.2m about 0.1 mile within.

Pilotage may be obtained from Cockburn Town, Grand Turks Island.

Vessels are advised to exercise extreme caution when making their approach to the narrow, steep-to shelf fronting Cockburn Harbor.

Six Hill Cays form the SE end of Caicos Bank and lie about 3 miles W of the S end of Long Cay.

Within the edge of Caicos Bank, at 0.7 mile, are the Fish Cays, 6 miles SSW of the S end of Long Cay.

There is a hill rising to 30.5m on the central point of Big Ambergris Cay, located 2 miles inside the edge of the bank, 2.5 miles S of Fish Cays.

There are some conspicuous white cliffs on the SE side of Big Ambergris Cay. Little Ambergris Cay, located to the W of Big Ambergris Cay, is 1 mile distant, has a very low profile, and cannot easily be seen when viewed from the edge of the bank.

A small cay and a number of rocks are located between Big Ambergris Cay and **Bush Cay** (21°11'N., 71°37'W.), the E of the Seal Cays, 5 miles to the S.

There is a light on Bush Cay. The Seal Cays include Pear Cay, Shot Cay, and White Cay and extend about 11 miles W from Bush Cay.

Swimmer Rock is a rocky patch, with depths of less than 4m, that lies close to the edge of the bank about 6 miles SE of Bush Cay.

A shoal, with a depths of 6.6m, lies about 2 miles SE of Swimmer Rock. The edge of the bank, with depths of 11m, extends 1 mile farther SE.

**Caution.**—The SE corner of Caicos Bank, S of Bush Cay, extends further E than charted and the proliferation of rocks shown on the bank in this area, and to the W, S of Seal Cay appear to be quite extensive shoal patches, rather than individual rocks.

**3.17 Turks Island Passage** (21°25'N., 71°19'W.) is the seaway between the Caicos and Turks Islands, and for the greater part, has ocean depths at its N entrance and gradually shallows to comparatively shoal water submarine ridge in its S entrance.

Depths fall away again to ocean depths farther to the S.

The passage is about 10 miles wide at its narrowest part, between the banks at its S end. It is used quite extensively by vessels bound to the ports of the West Indies, but Mona Passage is safer.

It is not recommended to vessels bound N at night as the lights in the S approaches are unreliable.

**Tides—Currents.**—Although the currents in the passage itself are reported to be weak, and the tidal currents inappreciable, local pilots affirm that ocean currents sometimes set strongly NE and SW and that tidal currents flow with a velocity approaching 3 knots.

**Caution.**—The principal dangers to be observed in Turks Island Passage are Philips Reef and the shoal water coastal bank it rests on. In the S entrance, a source of danger is Swimmer Rock, mentioned earlier, lying near the SE extremity of Caicos Bank, and Endymion Rock, located 15 miles to the E of Swimmer Rock.

Endymion Rock, with depths of 1.2m, and which only breaks in heavy weather, is surrounded by a cluster of rocky heads and shoals with depths of less than 10m extending 0.5 mile N and S.

The water over Endymion Rock is very dark so that the shoal area stands out well, but the rock itself is indistinguishable from the other dangers.

The bank on which the Turks Islands group lies, extends a farther 8.5 miles S and 3.5 miles SE from Endymion Rock. Shoal heads with 8.2, 14.6, and 16.5m, exist 1.5 and 3 miles SSW and 2.2 miles SE, respectively, of Endymion Rock. A depth of 18.5m lies 6 miles SSW of Endymion Rock.

**3.18 Turks Islands** (21°24'N., 71°07'W.), the easternmost islands of the Bahamas, consist of Grand Turk Island and Salt Cay, the two largest islands, and four smaller islets, numerous rocks, and a forest of coral heads.

These sandy and sparsely wooded islands lie along the W side of the elongated shoal water plateau atop the second of the five seamounts extending ESE from Caicos Passage.

Vessels are advised to exercise extreme caution when making their approach, particularly from the E because of the many sunken dangers that lie in a position where the plateau slopes down abruptly to ocean depths.

**Regulations.**—All vessels arriving from foreign ports should contact the harbormaster on VHF channel 16 for information and instructions before anchoring.

**Caution.**—Lights in the Turks and Caicos Islands have been reported to be unreliable.

Recently, it was reported that most of the range lights were permanently extinguished.

**3.19 Grand Turk Island** (21°29'N., 71°07'W.) is located on the W edge of the N part of the bank, 20 miles E of the Caicos Group. It is the largest and only important island of the group, being rather barren and largely low-lying throughout except for a narrow ridge of sand hills along the E side.

The island is 5 miles long and 1.5 miles wide. Conspicuous on the N extremity of the island is a water tower, distinctive with its red and white checkers, standing 43m high. The water tower stands close SE of Grand Turk Light, and is reported radar conspicuous up to 28 miles.

The NW side of Grand Turk Island consists of foul ground and projects 0.5 mile offshore, and farther again NW, there exists a narrow ridge with depths of less than 100m.

The balance of the W side of Grand Turk Island is bordered by a steep-to reef up to 0.3 mile offshore, and the edge of the bank lies only 0.2 mile outside the reef.

Northeast Reef is a dangerous reef extending about 2.5 miles NE from the N point of the island (21°31'N., 71°08'W.), and a narrow ledge, with depths of 11 to 36m, extends 6 miles farther NE.

On the E side of Grand Turk Island, a reef extends up to 1.5 miles offshore. It also extends 6 miles SSE from the S end of the island in an almost uninterrupted narrow ridge.

The edge of the bank lies 7 miles farther E and SE.

A series of small cays lie E and SE of Grand Turk Island. Gibb's Cay and Round Cay lie close together at the N end of the chain, 0.7 mile E of the S end of the island.

Long Cay lies on the reef 1.5 miles SE of Grand Turk, and Pear Cay lies 2 miles farther S. East Cay, with an elevation at 21m, lies about 5 miles SSE of Grand Turk Island.

Various formations of dangerous rocks and shoal patches lie between the above chain and to the W side of the bank, and between Toney Rock, a small islet lying about 0.7 mile SE of East Cay, and Salt Cay about 8 miles W.

There are some distinct rocks that lie 0.7 mile inside the E edge of the bank, 4 miles and 4.5 miles SW of Toney Rock.

The reef fringing the E and SE sides of Grand Turk Island is broken here and there, but it should be noted there is safe passage only with local knowledge.

**3.20 Cockburn Town** (21°28'N., 71°09'W.) ([World Port Index No. 10020](#)), also known as Grand Turk (not to be confused with Cockburn Harbor, Caicos Islands), is the administrative center for the Caicos and Turks Islands, the Commissioner having his residence and office close by. It is the

site of a United States Missile Tracking Station which is located near the S extremity of the island. Known locally as South Base, the station is connected by submarine cable to Cape Canaveral in Florida.

**Aspect.**—A conspicuous radio mast, from which an obstruction light is exhibited, is situated 2.5 miles SSW of the N point of the island. A light is shown from the N end of the island.

Several radio masts, some of which exhibit obstruction lights, are charted in various locations about the island.

The airport control tower, a red hut on stilts, is clearly visible from the W. A large white conical radar disc, located near the center of the island, is an excellent landmark.

**Pilotage.**—Pilotage is not compulsory, but may be obtained at Cockburn Town. Pilots for Cockburn Harbor, Caicos Islands may also be obtained here. The boarding ground is situated about 1 mile off the reef. Pilots may be contacted by VHF.

**Anchorage.**—Hawk's Nest Anchorage is sheltered from N and W, and offers anchorage to vessels drawing no more than 5.2m, with local knowledge.

Man-of-War Hole Anchorage is situated in depths of 11 to 16.5m, rock and coral, 1 mile SW of the Cockburn Town pier.

A vessel was reported to have anchored in depths of 6.6m, with the lighthouse at the N end of the island bearing 097°, 1.5 miles distant.

**Caution.**—A prohibited anchorage area and two submarine cable areas lie off the W coast of the island and may best be seen on the chart.

**3.21 Salt Cay** (21°20'N., 71°12'W.), the second inhabited island of the group, rises abruptly to a bold bluff in its NW part and elsewhere displays a terrain of low-lying hills interspersed with large salt ponds.

A light is exhibited on the summit of the bluff near the NW extremity of the cay.

Vessels, when making their approach from the E, are advised to keep the S extremity of the island bearing more than 291° so as to avoid sunken dangers charted about 3.5 miles to the SE.

A boat harbor is situated about 0.6 mile S of the NW point of Salt Cay and a derelict stone jetty, with conspicuous white house nearby, lies 1.1 miles S of the NW point.

**Anchorage.**—The open sea area S of Salt Cay is reported to have good anchorage in 12.8 to 18.3m.

**Big Sand Cay** (21°10'N., 71°15'W.), the third largest island, takes the form of two low-lying hillocks separated by a still lower-lying, bush-covered neck of land. Numerous sunken and above-water dangers lie scattered in all approaches except from the E.

There is a light on the N summit of Big Sand Cay. Submarine cables exist NW and SE of the N part of the island.

A reef, on which the sea breaks heavily during all but fine weather, extends 2 miles N from Big Sand Cay.

**Anchorage.**—The area to the SW of the island has anchorage in about 11m, sand, in a position with the low neck of land on Big Sand Cay bearing 067°, distant about 1 mile.

Vessels lie to the S of Wynns Rock, charted as a rocky depression in the sea floor, which shows up well as a dark patch contrasting with the white surrounding sand.



A vessel anchored in 13m on the W edge of the bank with the framework tower on the summit of Sand Cay bearing 090°, distant 1.4 miles.

**Caution.**—North Rock, 3m high, Middle Rock, and South Rock are located near the N end of a reef that extends nearly 0.2 mile N from Big Sand Cay. Other dangers include a dangerous shoal, with a least depth of 2.4m, lying 1 mile N of North Rock; its position not exactly determined.

A bank, defined by the 10m contour and on which there are depths of 2 to 9.1m, fronts the W side of Sand Cay up to 1 mile offshore in places.

Three seamounts, with their intervening passages, continue the Bahamas for a distance of about 160 miles ESE from Turks Islands. All three rise steep-to from ocean depths, particularly on the NE side, and all are surmounted by an extensive shoal water plateau, large portions of which have not been examined.

Vessels are advised to exercise great caution when navigating in the vicinity of these isolated uprisings of the ocean floor.

Mouchoir Passage, which separates the Turks Islands from Mouchoir Bank, is about 16 miles wide and very deep.

**Mouchoir Bank** (20°57'N., 70°42'W.), the N of the three seamounts, has much of its N side awash in two groupings of coral reef. A 1.8m depth rock lies between the two groupings.

This N side is reported to be very dangerous and the seas break on these reefs with considerable violence. There is a deep cleft which has not been fully surveyed in the middle of the N side of the bank which may extend S to divide the bank in two; this cleft has not been fully surveyed.

There are numerous shallow patches on the bank which break, however, the main part of the bank has not been surveyed nor has a probe been made for a reef reported on the bank. Attention is drawn to a dangerous rock 14 miles SW of North East Breaker.

**Caution.**—Vessels should keep well clear of the bank and not attempt to cross it.

North East Breaker is a dangerous rock that lies about 3 miles S of the end of the narrow tongue which forms the NE extremity of the bank, in a position 41 miles E of Sand Cay.

In general Mouchoir Bank is further S than charted with the North East Breaker slightly to the W of charted position.

**3.22 Silver Bank** (20°30'N., 69°45'W.), the middle of the three seamounts, has a portion of its NE side awash where coral reefs fall off abruptly, giving little warning of their presence.

Elsewhere, the bank has not been closely examined and as with the Mouchoir Bank, it is not advisable to cross it. A radar conspicuous stranded wreck lies on the reef as charted.

As the water on the bank is not discolored except over the shoals where it takes on a whitish appearance, soundings should be taken repeatedly, irrespective of the direction from which the bank is approached.

Silver Bank Passage, the seaway between Silver Bank and Mouchoir Bank, is a wide deep-water trench clear of all known dangers.

**Navidad Bank** (20°00'N., 68°50'W.), the E of the three seamounts, is composed of coral and sand, with general depths of less than 36.6m; there is a least known depth of 12.8m located on the E side of the N end of the bank.

Navidad Bank rises with characteristic abruptness from the sea floor, but in contrast to Silver and Mouchoir banks, nowhere breaks the ocean surface. The change of color over the bank is not sufficient to indicate the sunken dangers.

The broad expanse between Silver and Navidad Banks has several charted, mid-lying sunken dangers and caution is advised when navigating in this area.